

## Elephants and Donkeys by Kathleen Klenetsky

### Puffing Clinton

Bill Clinton, the blow-dried technocrat whose main claim to fame is that, as governor of Arkansas, he introduced stringent welfare cuts in one of the poorest states in country, has been picking up support from some unexpected, as well as expected, corners.

In early December, Sen. Sam Nunn (D-Ga.), the chairman of the Senate Armed Services Committee, gave his imprimatur to Clinton's candidacy. Although Nunn and Clinton are politically close (the two were founding members of the Democratic Leadership Council, a group of party "centrists" founded in 1984), Nunn has traditionally refused to endorse anyone in the primaries.

Clinton reportedly is on the verge of picking up another important endorsement—that of Rep. Stephen Solarz (D-N.Y.), one of the leading members of Israel's "amen corner" on Capitol Hill. According to congressional sources, Clinton has recently "reached out to Solarz for advice" on a wide range of issues, including foreign policy, especially vis-à-vis the Middle East.

Solarz "will probably endorse Clinton in late January or early February," these sources say. This would almost certainly open up rich new lodes of campaign contributions for Clinton, given Solarz's ability to tap into wealthy Jewish fundraising sources.

Clinton's campaign just recruited James Carville, the political strategist who helped engineer Harrison Wofford's come-from-behind trouncing of Richard Thornburgh in Pennsylvania last November.

It's not just Democrats who are jumping on Clinton's bandwagon. Art Laffer, the Republican "supply-side" guru of the Reagan era, went on the

ABC News television program "Nightline" on Dec. 27 to predict that George Bush would be defeated by a Clinton-Cuomo ticket!

Meanwhile, Clinton, who attended Oxford on a Rhodes Scholarship, earned praise from the City of London's *Financial Times* Dec. 30. In an analysis of the U.S. elections, which predicted that George Bush might get the same treatment from the U.S. electorate which was meted out to Winston Churchill when he was voted out of office in 1945, Michael Prowse praised Clinton as "intellectually sharp" and "well placed to challenge Mr. Bush."

"If the electorate focuses on future problems rather than past glories," opines Prowse, "the relative inexperience of a challenger such as Mr. Clinton may not prove much of a handicap. And the Churchill syndrome could claim another victim."

### 'Draft Cuomo' operation under way

New York Gov. Mario Cuomo's Dec. 20 announcement that he would not seek the Democratic presidential nomination has by no means ended speculation that he may still end up on the party's ticket come November.

The day after Cuomo made his decision public, the *Washington Post* editorialized: Cuomo "has said no. He should not now be made into the Elvis of the campaign—a declared non-candidate whose candidacy is believed to live."

But there are some people determined to make Cuomo just that.

Within days of the governor's no-go announcement, former New York State Democratic chairman Domenic Baranello, now Suffolk County (Long Island) chairman, announced plans to enter Cuomo in the New York primary

as a favorite son. "He must be a force in the 1992 convention. He must be seriously considered as a candidate," Baranello said.

Meanwhile, a Chicago-based Democratic political consultant has formed a draft-Cuomo committee, which plans to conduct a write-in campaign in the New Hampshire primary. "Our party should not allow the state Senate Republicans in Albany to hold [Cuomo] hostage," says Philip Krone. "He is our strongest possible candidate." Krone said he received more than 100 calls the first day the committee was announced.

Even after bowing out of the race, Cuomo himself has refused to categorically rule out a potential draft, and has also conceded it would be theoretically possible for him to enter the primaries after New Hampshire.

### Kerrey the hypocrite

Another Democratic candidate who has recently received lavish press publicity, including a big puff piece in *Parade* magazine, is Nebraska Sen. Robert Kerrey.

Not all of the publicity has been positive, however. The *New York Times* ran a front-page article Dec. 28 reporting that Kerrey, despite making access to medical care a big issue in his presidential campaign, runs a chain of restaurants and health clubs in Nebraska that provides health insurance to only 10% of its 1,100 employees.

Kerrey's business partner, Dean Rasmussen, claims they can't afford to pay for coverage. But Nebraska union leaders say Kerrey is being hypocritical. "When he's campaigning, he gives the impression that he is for the blue-collar worker, but he doesn't even treat his own employees right," says Jenney Brown, of the local Hotel Employees union.